



Memorandum

TO: Historic Landmarks Commission

FROM: Courtney Damkroger

SUBJECT: PDCSH 01-09-093

DATE: April 18, 2002

APPROVED:

DATE:

SUBJECT: PLANNED DEVELOPMENT REZONING FROM IP-INDUSTRIAL PARK TO A(PD) PLANNED DEVELOPMENT TO ALLOW UP TO APPROXIMATELY 1,494,700 SQUARE FEET OF INDUSTRIAL / RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT USES, INCLUDING COMMUNICATION SERVICE EXCHANGE FACILITIES, A PRIVATE BACK-UP POWER GENERATION AND ELECTRICAL SUBSTATION, COMMERCIAL SUPPORT USES, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR THE EMPLOYEES, AND ASSOCIATED SURFACE AND GARAGE PARKING FACILITIES

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Equinix, is proposing to rezone their subject 79-acre site from IP-Industrial Park to A(PD) Planned Development to allow approximately 1,494,700 square feet of industrial / research and development uses, including communication service exchange facilities, a private back-up power generation and electrical substation, commercial support uses, recreational facilities for the employees, and associated surface and garage parking facilities. The project site is located on the northerly side of State Route 85, westerly of Monterey Highway.

The remnants of the Christopher Ranch and its associated buildings are located along the northerly side of the project site (See Site and Grading Plans in the attached planset). The site and the buildings that are on it are not identified in the City of San Jose Historic Resources Inventory.

The General Plan Land Use Designation is Industrial Park, which would allow the proposed industrial and research and development uses. Surrounding uses include State Route 85 to the south, industrial park uses to the west and north, and Monterey Highway and single-family detached residential uses to the east. The proposed site design and development standards meet the intent of the Industrial Design Guidelines.

ANALYSIS

In order to better understand the significance of the Christopher Ranch and its associated buildings, Planning staff requested that the Applicant prepare an evaluation of the structures,



including both their historical and architectural significance. The consultants found that the reinforced, concrete block, fruit dehydrator building (ca 1928) qualifies for City Landmark status given its association with a technological shift in the fruit packing industry, a major part of the early agrarian economy of the Santa Clara Valley, and finally, its association with Ole Christopher and the Christopher family (persons of local historical significance). Planning staff has encouraged the owner to consider City Landmark designation.

Copies of both the original evaluation and the addendum are attached to this report. As noted in the Evaluation and its Addendum, there are a number of existing structures on the property, including the fruit dehydrator building, a head workman's cottage (converted for use as an office), a warehouse with a wood floor, a warehouse with a concrete floor, a small shed, and sections of steel rail in concrete used previously for loading and unloading fruit. The fruit dehydrator building was evaluated per the City of San Jose's Historic Resource Evaluation procedure. The structure attained a score of 79.28, making it a potential City Landmark. The consultant concluded that the other structures on the property were not historic resources, but that they did provide some degree of context for the dehydrator itself. The original residences constructed for the Christopher family have been removed/ demolished earlier. In addition to either preservation in-place or relocation on-site, and HABS documentation, the consultant also recommended that a "display should be built into the project which would focus on the historic orchard activities of the Christopher ranch." The Evaluation concludes that; "the dehydrator complex thus very well illustrates an important phase in the economic development of the Santa Clara Valley, and an industry which has been almost completely replaced by newer forms of development."

The environmental review for this project is pending final resolution of air quality impacts and associated mitigation measures, as well as traffic operational issues.

The Applicant has proposed that the fruit dehydrator building be either retained in-place and integrated into the design of future development on the property, or, alternatively, relocated to an appropriate and publicly accessible location elsewhere on the property. Both of these options would include HABS level photo documentation of the dehydrator and associated buildings suitable for display purposes and made available to interested local organizations/ archives. Staff has concluded that either of these options would adequately address potential historical/ agricultural/ architectural resources, and could be resolved in greater detail at the Planned Development Permit stage(s), as more detailed plans were known and available. Staff recommends that preservation of the dehydrator in place be the priority. Staff also recommends that an "interpretative display of historic photographs, machinery and other materials" be included in the project.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends the Historic Landmarks Commission support the proposal and forward a recommendation for approval as proposed by the applicant to both the Planning Commission and City Council with the following additions:

- State a preference for preservation of the dehydrator in place,
- Recommend the use of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties to guide preservation and/or reuse of the dehydrator,

- Include an interpretative display of historic photos, machinery and other materials at the site,
- Encourage the owners to apply for City Landmark designation,
- Request that the project return to the Commission at the time of the Development Permit in order to review and comment on the final plans for preservation and interpretation.

Courtney Damkroger
Historic Preservation Officer

Attachments

- Project Plans
- Historic Structures Evaluation of the Christopher Ranch in the City of San Jose, dated March 14, 2002, prepared by Archaeological Resource Management

Addendum to Historic Structures Evaluation of the Christopher Ranch, dated April 8, 2002, prepared by Archaeological Resource Management